

Remarks

In the action, objection to the drawings was made, objection to the specification was made, claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 USC 112, claims 5-6 and 8 were rejected as anticipated by Tweed et al. (US 5,591,072), and claim 7 was rejected as unpatentable over Tweed et al. in view of GB 2,072,785.

Drawings

The action indicates that reference signs '320', '220a', '252a' and '601' are not included in the drawings. However, applicants note that reference sign '220a' is shown in at least drawing Figs. 7, 10 and 11 and reference sign '601' is shown in at least drawing Fig. 21.

Regarding reference sign '320', page 16 has been amended above to replace numeral '320' with numeral '312', which is shown in the drawings - see Fig. 15.

Regarding reference sign '252a', approval and entry of the amendment shown in red in the attached drawing sheet for Fig. 20a is requested.

Based on the foregoing, withdrawal of the drawing objections is requested.

Specification

Page 16 has been amended above to correct the specification error noted in the action. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 112

Claim 6 has been amended to remove the language in question. Withdrawal of the rejection is therefore requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC 102 and 103

Claims 6-8

Claim 6 is amended above to more clearly point out that the sharpening stone is biased by a spring into a normal position radially outward from and above the blade edge, and that the sharpening stone moves linearly downwardly on a guide in order to engage the blade edge for sharpening. By contrast, Tweed et al. teaches a sharpener in which the sharpening stone is

normally positioned alongside the blade edge and is moved linearly from its side position into contact with the blade edge. See particularly Fig. 4A of Tweed et al. showing sharpening stone 38 and truing stone 58 in the sharpening position, where the knife (not shown) would be located in the space between sharpening stone 38 and truing stone 58. Fig. 4B of Tweed et al. shows the normal position of sharpening stone 38 as alongside the knife (not shown), where the knife would be located just to the right of shutter 80. Accordingly, Tweed et al. does not disclose all features of claim 6 and withdrawal of the anticipation rejection is appropriate. Claims 7 and 8 are patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 5

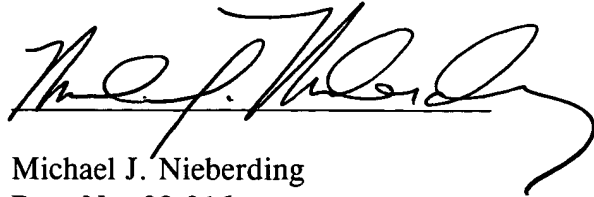
Claim 5 has also been amended to clarify that the sharpening stone is normally positioned radially outward from and above the blade edge, and that the sharpening stone is moved linearly downwardly into the blade sharpening position. Accordingly, claim 5 is distinguishable over Tweed et al. for similar reasons to those explained above with reference to claim 6, and withdrawal of the anticipation rejection is requested.

New Claim

New claim 19 expressly recites a slicing machine in which a blade sharpener includes a stone assembly with a pivotally mounted sharpening stone and a pivotally mounted deburring stone, a spring for biasing the stone assembly away from the blade edge, a guide for directing the movement of said sharpening stone along a linear path toward the blade edge for sharpening and away from the blade edge after sharpening, and **an actuator assembly for first causing said stone assembly to pivot and thereafter causing the stone assembly to move linearly along said guide until said sharpening stone and said deburring stone engage said blade edge.** Support for claim 19 can be found at page 20, lines 4-27. Notably, Tweed et al. does not teach a sharpener in which the actuator first pivots a stone assembly and then causes linear movement of the stone assembly into engagement with the blade. Instead, in Tweed et al., sharpening stone 38 is moved linearly only, and truing stone 58 is pivoted from one side of the knife to an opposite side. For this reason, claim 19 is patentable.

Please contact the undersigned attorney with any questions regarding this response.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Nieberding", written over a horizontal line.

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